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MONTANA
Comprehensive Health Planning NEWS

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HOSPITAL ROOM COSTS NEAR $100 A DAY

The national average cost in the U.S. of maintaining a hospital patient for one day increased from $9.50 in 1946 to more than $81 last year. This year it is expected to near $100 per day.

HEW Secretary, Elliott L. Richardson, says that Phase 2 of the wage-price freeze will include specific measures to control rising hospital and medical costs.

When a patient enters a hospital which averages 50% occupancy, he pays for almost two beds. Empty beds cost the U.S. $10,000,000 a day.

From Region 7 CHP Council, Inc., News and Views, Vol. II, No. 1, January, 1972.

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"B" APPLICATION FILED

The Regional CHP Office has received a grant application which, if funded, will provide federal resources to three of the remaining four unfunded areawide health planning organizations in Montana.

It is hoped that funding will be made available by the beginning of the fiscal year - July 1, 1972.

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STATE CHP DIRECTOR ON EXPECTATIONS BOARD

Robert Johnson, Director of the State CHP Office has been assisting the national CHP Office by serving on a work group established to set expectations for Comprehensive Health Planning's future.

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STATE SEEKS EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE FUNDS

The State CHP Office working in collaboration with Emergency Medical Care Planning Bureau of the State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, has submitted an application to Washington, D.C. to fund Emergency Health Care Planning and Services for all five planning areas of Montana.

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"Throughout time, a single man has been born, a single man has died. To think otherwise is to be led into statistics, is to attempt the impossible."
Jorge Luis Borges

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STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ELECTS OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

William Leary, Executive Director of the Montana Hospital Association, has been elected chairman of the Montana Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning.

Milo Dean, Cascade County Commissioner, was elected vice-chairman.

George Darrow, Billings, will continue as chairman of the Environmental Committee.

Charles C. Walter, Helena, was elected chairman of the Areawide Committee.

Other committee chairmen include: Anita Richards, Manpower Committee; Paul Carpino, Personal Health Services Committee; and George Clark, Facilities Committee.

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MORAL

The Montana Organization for the Reform of Abortion Laws (MORAL) born out of the defeat of the abortion bill during the last legislature, has groups organized in Billings, Helena, Bozeman and headquarters in Missoula.

Mrs. John Uda of Missoula is State President.

State Representative Dorothy Bradley, MORAL member from Bozeman, was one of the legislators who introduced the abortion bill.

Since some states have liberalized their abortion laws, Bradley says those who can afford transportation can get abortions.

"This is discriminatory against the poor," she said. "They can't afford the extra costs and are forced by state law to have the child."

Bradley substantiated her case, saying many local doctors support adoption of more liberal abortion laws. She said that in states with legalized abortion, more married women wanted abortions than unmarried.

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The Montana State Board of Health continues its ban on garbage burning and is attempting to discourage agricultural burning as well.

Burning is likely to be more destructive to desirable plants than weeds, and seldom destroys weed seeds.

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TOOTH TROUBLE TRACED TO MODERN FOOD

Eating refined food or food with chemical additives may be a primary cause of decay and malocclusions (crooked teeth), according to Great Falls dentist Dr. Vernon A. Nord.

Nord said primative people who eat unprocessed meat, fruits, or grains maintain health tooth structures which deteriorate when they begin to eat refined food.

He mentioned that when the children of a New Guinea tribe, whose members had no decay and few malocclusions, began to eat modern man's food, tooth problems developed and continued as long as they maintained their new diet.

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SANDING POSES HEALTH HAZARD

According to a report prepared by Lynn A. Brant, Montana State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences' Air Pollution Control specialist, Montana's Winter sanding program may be contributing to a health hazard by causing dust problems later in the year.

Brant said that much of the sand used, particularly in Great Falls, is too fine and is quickly crushed to dust. This dust can cause silicosis, as well as other dust aggravated diseases, and does little to increase traction.

Report recommendations include elimination of sanding when possible, increasing the use of alternate snow removal methods such as plows and salt and immediate removal of sand from the streets after melt-off.

Brant also suggested that the sand be screened before use.

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CITIZENS SEEK DOCTOR

A Citizens Committee for a Doctor has established a fund at the Little Horn State Bank in Hardin.

The group will use the money raised for postage, telephone calls and, if possible, to help pay expenses for an interested doctor to visit Hardin for an interview.

A spokesman said the committee's operation is geared toward selling the community to a prospective doctor, rather than helping one professional find another to join him in the community.

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According to Ben Wake, Director of the Division of Environmental Sciences of the Montana State Dept. of Health, more than 130 industrial firms have spent in excess of $31,000,000 for pollution control in Montana since 1967.

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SALINE SEEP STERILIZES LAND

Alkali contamination or "saline seep," familiar to Montanans as a white crust or deposit around ponds or where ground water has evaporated is a growing problem in the state.

The situation received national attention when Rep. Richard Shoup (R-Mont.) requested a $1 million congressional appropriation in mid-April to combat the problem.

Shoup claimed that, as of 1971, 81,000 acres of Montana farm land had been rendered sterile by alkali, and predicted the figure would rise to 210,000 acres by 1981.

The growing use of alkali contaminated water for irrigation has compounded the problem. When this water evaporates in the fields, it leaves the familiar white deposits of alkali that eventually prevent plant growth.

Shoup said the problem does not stop with land contamination. Rain dissolves these surface deposits of alkali and washes it into ponds and streams where it destroys plant and fish life.

Alkali contamination poses a substantial threat to the entire Missouri River Basin, according to Shoup, because of progressive downstream build-up of alkali in river waters.

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ONE NINTH OF AMERICA HAS PUFFED POT

U.S. Medicine, Vol. 8, No. 5, March 1, 1972.

Review of the second report in the series "Marijuana and Health," ordered by Congress.

"Converging evidence from several recent surveys estimate the total number in the United States who have ever used marijuana to be 15 to 20 million."

A very recently released National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse survey has estimated that the total number at present may well exceed 24 million.

"Marijuana use does not appear to have a casual role in the commission of crimes," it adds.

"Heavy hashish users in the military have reported bronchitis, asthma and nose and throat inflammation which improved upon discontinuation of the drug."

As for possible therapeutic uses, in addition to the treatment of glaucoma, there are indications marijuana may help treat depression and hypertension, the report says.

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The White Sulphur Springs Hospital Guild has collected funds to purchase a cardiac monitor for the Mountainview Memorial Hospital there. Total collected exceeds $5,000.

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TURTLE TROUBLE

Pet turtles which are sold all across the U.S. may be contributing to the spread of salmonellosis, a form of food poisoning.

Estimates of the percentage of turtles thought to be carrying the disease range from 25 percent, according to southern turtle farmers, to 95 percent, according to Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) who disclosed the turtle threat.

Salmonellosis causes fever, stomach cramps, vomiting and intense diarrhea, with nearly certain recovery in strong patients, but it may well be fatal if it strikes those in weakened condition.

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PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE CONSIDERS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Personal Health Services Committee met in Helena, May 4 to consider action on the recommendations contained in the Low Income Task Force Report.

The report was commissioned by that committee two years ago.

Following deliberations on the numerour recommendations, the committee discussed action on a proposal from the Advisory Council requesting study of the role of city-county health departments in Montana.

It is anticipated that this committee will meet again May 19 to further consider the role and structuring of areawide health departments.

The group also discussed conducting a general workshop or seminar on health maintenance organizations.

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PRICE COMMISSION RULING ON HOSPITAL SALE OF DRUGS

The Cost of Living Council's Price Commission has ruled that hospitals must differentiate between sales of drugs and supplies to inpatients and to outpatients.

Inpatient sales are considered to be part of the hospital's services and thus subject to the six percent ceiling on price increases, the Price Commission says.

Sales to outpatients are considered retail sales subject to the Price Commission's limitations on mark-up, similar to that imposed on pharmacies.

A hospital selling drugs or supplies to outpatients need only post a sign stating the availability of a base price schedule.

From Washington Report on Medicine and Health, April 10, 1972 - No. 1293.

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The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of the 1970 federal law which bans cigarette advertising from radio and television.

The court declined to review a lower court decision upholding the ban.

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RURAL HOUSING LOAN IS CHEAP MONEY

The USDA Farmers Home Administration Program, "Section 504, Rural Housing Loan," provides low-interest loans for home repair for persons in rural areas.

Funds may be used for such purposes as roof and window repairs, installation and repair of structural supports, water supplies and sewer systems, installation of bathroom or kitchen plumbing, etc.

The income of the borrower, who must be the owner of the property, must fall below a specified amount, dependent on the size of the family. The cut-off is approximately $5,800 for a family of four and $6,100 for a family of five.

A family may borrow up to $3,500 at a flat rate of one percent interest over ten years and should receive the loan from two to six weeks after the time of application.

The Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC) has a tri-county program to assist people in Lewis and Clark, Jefferson and Broadwater Counties in utilizing Rural Housing Loans and other governmental programs. The assistance is free and is geared to arranging interviews with the appropriate county Farm Home Administration Supervisor, filling out applications and helping with paperwork.

Further information may be obtained from the following RMDC staff: Clint Grimes, Helena, 442-1552; Sue Holt, Augusta, Wolf Creek, Lincoln, 562-3473; Drew Dawson, Jefferson County, 225-3874; and Larry Watterson, Broadwater County, 266-5209.

The RMDC staff will assist rural residents in utilizing other programs also available, including programs concerning new and rental housing.

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TWO ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS VIE FOR GUBERNATORIAL NOMINATION

Lt. Governor, Thomas Judge, and Dallas Howard, chairman of Montana Statewide Low Income Organization, are vying for the Democratic nomination for governor.

Both men are members of the Montana Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning.

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". . . some people who are trying to change things end up working very hard at doing what will make them accepted by the power structure . . . In trying to become part of the system . . . he forgets the people he should be fighting for. He has been taken over by the system."

-The New Radicals

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MOSQUITO CAMPAIGNS LAUNCHED

With the threatened return of sleeping sickness, or Western Equine Encephalitis, during the warm months, increasing numbers of Montana communities are discussing mosquito control.

State Dept. of Health personnel are traveling across the state to speak on the problem with interested community representatives.

Particular areas must be surveyed to locate stagnant water where mosquito larvae are found. From such a survey, potential methods of control and cost estimates may be formulated to enable a community to take control action.

A novel approach to the problem has been attempted along the Missouri River where flooding and many sloughs complicate mosquito problems.

Crews have been planting Gambusia, a species of tiny fish which thrive on mosquito larvae, and have been proved effective at keeping hatches of the pests at a minimum.

Chemical sprays and electrical traps are only partly effective. The most effective control method still appears to be elimination of potential breeding water.

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RESERVATION ALCOHOLISM COMMITTEE FORMED

A committee "to start and continue programs to combat the high levels of alcoholism and drug abuse" on the Rocky Boy Reservation has resulted from a four-day workshop recently held in Poplar.

The purpose of the workshop, according to director, Bud Mason, was to begin development of a "therapeutic community" on the reservation to cope with the problems.

Revealing that he stopped the use of alcohol and drugs through the help of an "ancient Indian Religion," Mason stressed the importance of both religion and the "ethnic" way of handling problems.

"We have to include cultural improvement programs," he added.

"Alcoholism is a serious problem everywhere, but nowhere is it as bad as among Indians," Mason said.

"Every health and social problem on the reservation is connected with it."

"The only effective education methods," according to Mason, "are local involvement."

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BOULDER GRANT TO RELEASE SOME PATIENTS

The Boulder River School and Hospital has been awarded a grant of $94,720 by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, according to Rep. Richard Shoup (R-Mont.)

The grant was made to establish community centered residential care of the retarded, and return the less severely retarded to their communities.

Shoup said part of the funds are earmarked for preparing the home communities to receive the handicapped individuals.

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FACILITIES COMMITTEE LOOKING FOR ACTION

At its last meeting, the Health Facilities Committee of the Montana Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning agreed to review a proposal that would involve the committee more directly in the review and approval of Hill-Burton fund application.

The committee would be responsible for forming review teams to investigate facility applications at the local level and to discuss such applications with the appropriate areawide CHP organizations.

The committee will seek Advisory Council approval of this proposal at the next general meeting.

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The Montana State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences reports 31,000 automobiles were junked in the state last year.

"Only a few of these old cars were transported to acceptable disposal sites," said Terry Carmody, director of the department's solid waste program.

"Most can be seen along highways, in fields, forests, vacant lots, back yards, dumps and junk yards," he added.

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ACID HELPS ALCOHOLICS

A Veterans Administration psychiatrist, treating alcoholics with LSD in a 26-day program in Topeka, Kansas, is getting better than a 50 percent "abstinence and much improved" rate after one year. "At least 75 percent were helped to some extent," he says.

By comparison, 12-20 percent abstinence is considered "pretty good" in most alcoholism treatment programs, explains Dr. Kenneth E. Godfrey, assistant chief of the Topeka VA Hospital's West Psychiatric Service.

Funds to expand the scope of Dr. Godfrey's program have been denied.

"It's a sin if they don't back research in this area," he says.

* * *

A dental research program designed to determine the value of dental selants in the prevention of tooth decay is being conducted in Libby by Dr. Philip Baskin, of the University of the Pacific School of Dentistry in San Francisco.

Initial operations will take two or three weeks and be followed by observations at regular intervals.

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Plans are being finalized for the new Northern Montana Hospital in Havre. Construction is expected to begin in late 1972 and be completed in mid-1974.

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STATE OFFICE ASSISTS WITH HEALTH CENTER GRANT

The State CHP staff working with Craig Whitney, executive director of the South Central Regional Health Planning Council, Inc., has developed and submitted a grant application to the Regional Office of HEW for the funding of a family health center in Billings.

If funded, this program would provide a comprehensive basic health service to a socio-economic cross-section of the Billings community.

The program will, in part, replace the Billings Referral Project, which was established by the medical community to serve the "working poor" of the Billings area.

* * *

Luke's 100, a Glasgow group organized two years ago to help support the Glasgow Deaconess Hospital and Valley View Home, recently donated $2,000 to the hospital for the purchase of new radiology equipment.

The group has previously donated over $16,000 to the two institutions.

* * *

A proposed Choteau mosquito program would cover the area within a three mile radius of the center of the city at an estimated cost of $15-20,000. The program would involve weekly treatments of problem areas for 12 weeks.

Choteau city officials say funds are not available for so extensive a program.

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A new family planning office has been established in Glasgow.

Office head, Mrs. Pat Hallett, said monthly clinics are being scheduled and will be operated by herself, a doctor and two nurses.

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A survey of Baker area water supplies is being conducted under the direction of the Fallon County USDA committee.

It is suspected that the high sodium content of the water is contributing to heart trouble in Baker area residents through hardening of the arteries.

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White Sulphur Springs is moving to form a garbage district to comply with state regulations.

The city is also the location of a lumber mill with teepee burners which periodically flood the city with smoke.

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NORTH CENTRAL AREAWIDE ELECTS OFFICERS, BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

The North Central Areawide Health Planning Council held a general membership meeting Thursday, May 4, in Fort Benton. Rev. John Soderberg of Fort Benton was elected president of the organization replacing James Adams of Lewistown. Sister Barbara Ann Brenner was elected vice-president and Frank Ernest, secretary. New board members elected by the general membership include:

Blaine County - Esther Sheets
Cascade County - Frances Gosney
Fred Holbrook
Orin Cure
Mrs. Ernest Elespuru
Frank Ernest
Fergus County - Ed Morse
Glacier County - Edward J. Shurr
Liberty County - Irene Madson
Roy Wodarz
Pondera County - Robert R. Emerick
Toole County - Gary Vihinen
Dr. John Harris
Fort Belknap - Don Martin

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DRUG COMPANIES SELLING WATER?

Congressional investigators have charged that drug companies allowed 32 ineffective vaccines to remain on the market for at least 10 years "while drug regulators quietly exchanged memos."

In the report, prepared by the General Accounting Office and released by Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D-Conn.), investigators cited the Division of Biologics Standards for releasing flu vaccines that were less than one percent of required potency.

Ribicoff quoted a DBS control official as saying that, "in his opinion, if manufactures could get away with it, they would sell water as vaccine."

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Here lies the noble fearless knight,
Whose valour rose to such a height;
When death at last had struck him down,
His was the victory and renown.
He reck'd the world of little prize,
And was a bugbear in men's eyes;
But had the fortune in his age
To live a fool and die a sage.

Don Quixote's Epitaph
Cervantes

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For any information on any of the above topics, please write to:

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